

C. ferruginea but larger than *C. minuta*), short legs, long bill drooping at the tip, grey upperparts with pale feather edges, dark carpal joint area, streaked breast, double eyestripe, indistinct pale wingbar, and dark tail and rump with whitish sides. It was also seen by C. Carter, who agrees with the identification (pers. comm.). A full description is on file at the Zoological Museum, Tring.

This is the second record of this species from Zambia, the first being of one at Mufulira (12.34'S, 28.16'E) on 1 and 2 November 1975 (Robinson 1976).

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UNREPORTED HUNTING BEHAVIOUR OF THE MADAGASCAR MALACHITE KINGFISHER
¹*CORYTHORNIS VINTSIOIDES* ON GRAND COMORO

The Madagascar Malachite Kingfisher is a regular, but not a common bird on Grand Comoro. Benson (1960) found it "only in the north of the island, at tree-fringed pools on the coast and at the Mitsamiouli crater-lake" and Forbes-Watson (1969) saw three on the coast and one "at c. 1,000 feet a.s.l." (i.e. about 2500 m from the coast) during a six-day stay. On the three other Comoro islands it is much more common and is also found inland, where it occurs along fresh water, which is lacking totally on Grand Comoro, a volcanic island without permanent rivers (Benson 1960).

Benson (1960) records as stomach contents on the Comoros, insects and, in three specimens, crustaceans. Milon, Petter & Randrianasolo (1973) state that in Madagascar the nominate race occurs along fresh waters but also along the coast in the northwest, although this pertains probably to mangroves (see Schlegel & Pollen 1868).

During a stay of about a month on Grand Comoro in July and August 1981 we met with the species twice in mangroves (once at Hahaia and once at Ouroveni, in the north). However, it was also seen in dry vegetation twice by R. Potvliege (pers. comm.) near Droudé (a coastal village) and we observed one bird perched in a baobab at Dzahadjou (in the south about 2 km from the coast). Our final observation of the species near M'bachilé at the coast (11.45'S, 43.13'E) enabled us to witness an undescribed method of prey-catching.

At low water level a steep cliff about 3 m high is apparent in this locality and, along narrow ridges in the wall of this cliff, large numbers of small crabs were hiding. The kingfisher was first seen sitting on some rocks which emerged from the sea about 10 m away. It then made a short flight towards the cliff and quickly snatched a small crab from a hiding place. It immediately returned to its perch on the rocks and then made another flight towards the cliff a little later, after which it returned again to the perch. On our approach it flew away. To our knowledge this method of hunting has not been reported before in *Corythornis vintsioides*.

We thank C.H. Fry for commenting on our observation.

¹We follow the nomenclature of Fry (1980)

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THE BLACK AND WHITE FLYCATCHER *BIAS MUSICUS* IN KENYA

Britton (1980) describes the Black and White Flycatcher *Bias musicus* as unrecorded in coastal Kenya for over 50 years, though suggesting that it might still occur in Rabai and Ribe forests. I can trace no recent records from inland Kenya either, apart from a single male specimen in the National Museum, Nairobi, that was collected at Maua in the Nyambeni Hills, Meru District in 1944, apparently by J.P. Benson (G.R. Cunningham-van Someren, pers. comm.). The racial identity of this apparently disjunct Meru population has not been properly determined; White (1963) gave the range of *changawensis* as "Kenya inland to the eastern side of the rift" but it is not clear whether he examined any specimen from Meru District.

Very little now remains of the Nyambeni Forest, but about 20 km east of Maua lies the little-known Ngaia Forest, covering about 36 km² at a much lower altitude than the Nyambeni Forest (1100-1400 m). On 26 November 1978, during an investigation of the ecology and avifauna of the forest (Diamond & V.C. Fayad, unpubl.) I heard a harsh nasal call note from a flycatcher about 10 m up in a broad-leaved tree. The bird was identified as a female *Bias musicus*; I did not know the species, and was not aware of its present rarity in Kenya, but the short chestnut tail, very broad black bill, conspicuous white eye, white underparts, black crown and chestnut upperparts cannot be confused with any other species. The bird was foraging actively for insects beneath the edge of the canopy, frequently flying up to pick insects from the underside of a leaf as well as sallying out to catch them in mid-air, and it remained under observation for over five minutes. It was easy to find on subsequent days once the call was heard, but I came across no more in the forest. If Ngaia Forest is its last refuge in inland Kenya, other than any that may persist in the remaining vestiges of the Nyambeni Forest, then its status must be regarded as threatened since the Ngaia Forest is being rapidly over-exploited for timber, charcoal and poles.

The sighting reported above is referred to by Britton (1980).

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We are sorry for the late appearance of this note. Ed.